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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 631
By Bowers

A RESOLUTION relative to cotton boll weevil eradication.

WHEREAS, in 1997, cotton ranked second as Tennessee's most valuable crop, accounting for approximately \$209.4 million in farm cash receipts; and

WHEREAS, the cotton boll weevil insect poses a serious threat to cotton production in Tennessee: it is estimated that the cotton boll weevil will reduce cotton yields by as much as ten percent (10%) if not adequately controlled; and

WHEREAS, it is also estimated that long-term pesticide use to control the cotton boll weevil can be decreased by forty percent to ninety percent (40%-90%) in circumstances where eradication has been otherwise successfully accomplished; and

WHEREAS, the cotton boll weevil eradication program was established as a cooperative effort of the Southeast Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and participating state agencies, including the Tennessee Department of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the cotton boll weevil eradication program was initially established in 1978 in Virginia and North Carolina, and has since been successfully expanded to include cotton growers in South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, cotton growers in the seven (7) West Tennessee counties (Tipton, Shelby, Fayette, Hardeman, McNairy, Hardin, and Haywood) that comprise Region 1 passed a referendum to support the southeast cotton boll weevil eradication program by means of an

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assessment of up to two hundred eleven dollars (\$211) per acre over a seven (7) year period to fund pesticide application and to monitor the cost of the program; and

WHEREAS, the total cost of the cotton boll weevil eradication program in Region 1 is estimated to approach \$35.3 million; and

WHEREAS, expansion of the cotton boll weevil eradication program is expected to eventually include all cotton-growing counties in West Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, additional funding from other sources is needed to supplement the cotton boll weevil eradication program and to assist cotton growers in reducing costs associated with the program; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That this General Assembly most resolutely supports and encourages the Commissioner of Agriculture in the commissioner's efforts to secure additional funding for the cotton boll weevil eradication program and to maintain the current level of federal funding for such program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Body hereby expresses its ongoing support for the cotton boll weevil eradication program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Commissioner of Agriculture.